

North Dakota is a big state with a small town feel. Even within government, bureaucratic barriers and turf protection are set aside as individuals come together to accomplish great things. This has been especially true in the area of technology. Important projects like the implementation of a statewide broadband network connecting government, higher education campuses and K-12 schools; and the adoption of new administrative software and student information systems on a statewide basis would be impossible in most other states. The “culture of cooperation” found in North Dakota allows us to maximize our technology investments through the adoption of a shared vision and spirit.

Governor John Hoeven and his administration have established six pillars for building a better future for North Dakota: Excellence in Education, Economic Development, Agriculture, Energy, Technology and Quality of Life. These pillars identify focus areas for attracting new industries and growing the existing economy. Technology drives much of the change we see today, creating new challenges as well as exciting possibilities. The application of technology to excellence in education, is especially critical. Education acts as a catalyst, developing the workforce necessary to lead the transition to a new economy. Technology links people and businesses, schools and government, in ways never before possible, creating vital new opportunities for all North Dakota citizens.

The Statewide Information Technology Plan 2002 outlines North Dakota’s goals with respect to the implementation of technology for government and education. The plan is comprised of three key areas: State Government, K-12, and Higher Education. The respective

technology leaders in each area are Curtis Wolfe, Chief Information Officer for the state; Grant Crawford, Chief Information Officer, University Systems; and Dan Pullen, Director, Educational Technology Council. They have developed the goals and strategies in conjunction with various executive committees they lead. In the plan, you will find a number of goals where shared efforts across the three areas are planned, demonstrating the collaborative environment unique to North Dakota. Along with the goals, the accomplishments demonstrate the strong basis on which we build and give a glimpse of how technology has enriched the lives of North Dakotans.

“We are laying the foundation for government, education business’s and industries throughout the state to connect to the world — and just as important, for the world to connect with North Dakota.”

Governor John Hoeven, State of the State Address, 2002.

Because the planning process is a continuous one, the Statewide Information Technology Plan 2002 provides a glimpse into the process at this point in time. The plan is simply that, a plan. The actual implementation and even the strategies will evolve depending on funding, changes in technology, or changing requirements. The purpose of the plan is to establish the overall direction and provide an important measuring tool to judge our progress. More detailed plans will be developed based on this direction and will propel us forward to

greater achievements.

You are invited to gaze into the future with us and explore the possibilities defined by the goals on the following pages: online services transforming the way government works, virtual classrooms expanding the curriculum in rural schools, and world-class educational opportunities supported by the technology of the North Dakota University System. Experience the “culture of cooperation” as we create an environment in North Dakota that is seen as progressive and responsible to the changing needs of its citizens.